P.A. 2148
2223 R. Flexman

A REVIEW OF THE PROJECT FOR Building a NEW SQUARE AT *WESTMINSTER*;

SAID TO BE

For the USE of *Weſtminſter-School.*

K

By a SUFFERER. D.D.
Tho. Wilson
~~Prebendary of Westminster~~

PART THE FIRST.

And they covet Fields, and take them by Violence; and Houſes, and take them away: So they oppreſs a Man and his Houſe, even a Man and his Heritage.

Prophet MICAH, Ch. ii. ver. 2.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

PREFACE.

WHOEVER is acquainted with the Diſpoſition of ENGLISHMEN, knows, that ſome *ſpecious* Pretence of GENERAL UTILITY too commonly covers the *Deſigns* of *artful* Men, who propoſe to derive any *private* Advantage from a *public* Tranſaction.

The Words PUBLIC GOOD, like a SHIELD, are born on the

left Arm before the *Aſſailant*, to defend the Attacks of pretended Enemies, whilſt the *Dagger* of *Self-Intereſt*, in the *right*, *ſtabs* all whom he has a Mind to ruin.

The various Methods by which Gentlemen of great *Power* and *Intereſt* have been perſuaded to promote Schemes of that Nature, is not my preſent Buſineſs to recollect:----- *Many* of them, tho' *gloſs'd over* with the fineſt *Varniſh*, have been found to be *within* extremely defective:----*Others* may have paſſed in the Hurry of *National* and more *important* Affairs;----and yet, after the

the Experience of a *ſhort* Seaſon, have been diſcovered to be *wide* of their expected End, and *wiſhed undone*: ---- And it is not altogether improbable the ſame Way of Thinking may obtain on the Subject of the following Sheets.

If the *Projectors*, their *Friends* and *Agents*, have themſelves broke the *Act* obtained in their Favour, and come to Parliament for a *New* One, --- the *Sufferers* will then have another Opportunity of laying their unhappy Caſe before the Great GUARDIANS of their LIBERTIES and PROPERTIES, where they have the greateſt Hopes

Hopes of *Relief*; as every Argument formerly offered on their Behalf will then come with redoubled Force.

The *former Patrons* of this Scheme will find, in this little Tract, That what they were perſuaded to believe was intended for the Good of WESTMINSTER-SCHOOL, may be converted, by the Hands it is now in, to *Purpoſes* totally *diſtinct* from the original *Plea* of the Petition: ----

That all Pretences of PUBLIC UTILITY abſolutely fall to the Ground: ----

That

That the Injury to ſo many hundred *innocent* and *induſtrious* Families, in hourly Danger of being driven out of their Habitations and Employments, and ſtarved (at a Time when every Neceſſary of Life is almoſt double the Price, and when uſeful Hands were never more wanted), is a more affecting Conſideration, *at this critical and melancholy Juncture*, than it was when they, near Three Years ago, petitioned the LEGISLATURE for *Relief*.

Laſtly----It is humbly preſumed, that no candid Reader will be offended with the following

lowing Leaves,---which are intended to ſhew, how different the *Motives*, which were *then* aſſigned in the Projectors Petition, are from the *Effects*;--- and to defend his own and the Properties of many hundred unoffending Families, who have certainly as great a Right to be protected by the LEGISLATURE in their EASE, POSSESSIONS, and CONVENIENCIES, as----*Thoſe*, who want to deprive *them* of them for their own *private* Advantage.

A

REVIEW

OF THE

PROJECT for Building a New Square at *Weſtminſter*, &c.

AS the Tree is, ſo will be the Fruit.

Cultivation will amend *Nature*; and what *Cultivation* is to the *Plant*, *Education* is to the *Child*.

The *Nurſery* has much Power to form *Habits*; the School, to reform them.

8

Diſcipline may correct the Miſchiefs ariſing from *Indulgence*; and the *Diſcipline* of Public Schools is, perhaps, a more effectual *Alterative* than any other.

SCHOOLS then, and Public Schools more eſpecially, are very intereſting Objects of the Public Attention.

Of all Public Schools, the Public is, on various Accounts, moſt intereſted in that founded by the excellent QUEEN ELIZABETH at WESTMINSTER.

It is moſt in the public Eye—The Children of thoſe Families, which have obtained a Sort of *Inheritance* in the Public Service, are chiefly educated there; and it has the Honour and the Happineſs of being under the peculiar Patronage of *thoſe*, who have had the Public at their Devotion.

In

In ſhort, it may be eſteemed the principal Fountain-Head of all our Accompliſhments, and all our Virtues.

Flouriſhing it has always been, becauſe it has always been under the Direction of *grave* and excellent Maſters.

The very Names of CAMPDEN, BUSBY, KNYPE, FRIEND, are ſo many Proofs.

And the Names of their Illuſtrious Pupils, were it poſſible to enumerate them, would furniſh ſo many more.

The preſent MASTER makes it his Glory to inlarge and improve the *Bounds of his Dominion*; and it is hoped he will find his Account accordingly.

His *Schemes* for that Purpoſe have been thought worthy of all the *faci-*

litating Power, which the Authority of the Legiſlature could give them.

And if I preſume to *review* what has paſſed on this Occaſion, I hope the BIRTHRIGHT of an ENGLISHMAN will ſerve me both as an *Apology* and *Protection*.

No doubt, there is in the LEGISLATURE Authority ſufficient to diſpoſſeſs Individuals of their Properties *for public Conſiderations*.

But then, the *Conſiderations* offered on the Behalf of the Public ought to be *manifeſt* and *undeniable*.

The *Compenſation* provided for ſuch Individuals ought to be worthy of ſo extraordinary an *Interpoſition*.

As much as poſſible ſhould be left to their *Option*; and *coercive* Means ſhould be the very laſt Reſource.

If

If *Individuals* become *voluntary* Undertakers to effectuate theſe public Purpoſes, they ſhould be treated with at leaſt as much *Suſpicion* on one hand, as *Confidence* on the other.

Not a ſingle Allegation will be taken on Content—

Whatever is neceſſary to a thorough Information, will be inſiſted on—

Whatever has a Tendency to Impoſture, will be guarded againſt.—

No *Precaution* will be omitted—No *Conſequences* left doubtful—And againſt all poſſible Abuſe and Miſdemeanor—proper Penalties ſhould be provided.

No Pretence can warrant any Injury to the Subject; nor can too much Care be taken to preſerve both the *Wiſdom* and *Juſtice* of the Legiſlature from *Attaint*.

Theſe

Theſe are Propoſitions that will ſtand of themſelves;—and what regard they have to the Facts that follow, thoſe very Facts will ſhew.

Upon the 16th Day of *January* 1755. the following Petition was preſented to, and received by, the Honourable Body to whom it is addreſſed.

" *To the Honourable the Commons of*
" Great Britain *in Parliament aſ-*
" *ſembled.*

" *The humble Petition of the Reverend*
" William Markham, *Doctor of*
" *Laws, and* Thomas Salter, *Eſq;*
" *on Behalf of Themſelves and*
" *others;*

" *Sheweth,*

" THAT *by reaſon* of great Num-
" bers of young Noblemen and
" Gentlemen *being* at *Weſtminſter-*
" School,

" School, *divers* of the Houſes where
" ſuch Noblemen and Gentlemen are
" lodged and boarded *are* at a con-
" ſiderable Diſtance from the School;
" which occaſions many Inconveni-
" encies, and *prevents* the Scholars
" of the ſaid School from being ſo
" immediately under the Inſpection
" of their Maſters out of School-
" Hours, as otherwiſe they might be:
" That the Piece of Ground now
" called *Deans-Yard*, together with
" certain Pieces of Ground conti-
" guous thereto, upon which ſeveral
" *old* and *ruinous* Houſes and *Build-*
" *ings* are *now ſtanding*, is a very
" convenient *Situation whereupon* to
" build divers proper and commodi-
" ous Houſes to ſerve as Boarding
" Houſes for the Scholars of the ſaid
" School; and which, together with
" ſome of the Prebendal Houſes be-
" longing to the Chapter of *Weſt-*

" *minſter*,

" *minſter*, and the Houſe appropri-
" ated to the Head Maſter of the
" ſaid School, will form a *Square*,
" which will be very near the ſaid
" School, and every way commodious
" for the *Reception*, *Entertainment*,
" *Safety*, and *Education* of the Scho-
" lars of the ſaid School: But, *by*
" *reaſon* that ſeveral of the ſaid Pieces
" of Ground and Houſes are *in Set-*
" *tlement*, or are the Property of *In-*
" *fants*, and others unable by Law
" to contract for the Sale thereof,
" your Petitioners, though willing,
" cannot proceed in buying in ſuch
" Pieces of Ground, Houſes, and
" Buildings, without the Aſſiſtance
" of an Act of Parliament: Your
" Petitioners therefore moſt humbly
" pray, that Leave be given *them* *
" to bring in a Bill to enable them-

* This is not Parliamentary Style.

" ſelves,

" ſelves, and other proper Perſons to
" be nominated for that Purpoſe, to
" contract for, and buy, ſuch Pieces
" of *Ground*, *Houſes*, and *Buildings*,
" and *thereupon* to erect ſuch new
" Buildings, under proper Reſtrictions
" and Regulations, as ſhall be re-
" quiſite for carrying into Execution
" the ſeveral Purpoſes aforeſaid, or
" that your Petitioners may have ſuch
" other RELIEF as to the * *Houſe*
" ſhall ſeem meet.

" *And your Petitioners ſhall ever*
" *pray.*

" WILLIAM MARKHAM.
" THOMAS SALTER."

The *Subſcribers* of this Petition were Two Perſons of Diſtinction — *One*, MASTER of the School —

* In all former Petitions the Houſe of Commons was ſtyled *Honourable*.

The *Other*, *Deputy* CLERK OF THE SPICERY.

It was the good Fortune of theſe Gentlemen, to find the Honourable Houſe rather diſpoſed to wiſh well to the *Petition* for the Sake of the *School*,—than to think meanly of the *School* for the Sake of the *Petition*.

How does it follow, That *by reaſon of great Numbers being at Weſtminſter-School*, the Boarding Houſes are at a *conſiderable Diſtance?*—— That the converting *Deans-Yard* into a *Square* would render it a more convenient *Situation* than at preſent, or — that *enlarging its Bounds* will draw it *nearer* the School?——An Application for *Power* to *compel* Men to part with their Properties, ſeems to be a new Application for RELIEF. —— And tho' *claſſical* Accuracy is not expected from the *mere* Man of Buſineſs,

Buſineſs, even the *mere Man of Buſineſs* would be aſhamed of *falſe Logic* and *bad Engliſh.*

But waving the *Form*, let us proceed to the *Grounds* of the Petition; namely,—The Numbers of Scholars, —and the many Inconveniencies reſulting from the Diſtance between the Boarding Houſes and the School. —I ſhould be glad to know,—whether there is any material Difference between the Numbers *now*, and the Numbers under the *former* Maſters.

For if the Numbers for many Years paſt have been nearly the ſame, —the Inconveniencies during that Period were the ſame too:—So that the *preſent Maſter*, in ſuch Caſe, would have no more to complain of than his *Predeceſſors.*—And if the Numbers have been increaſed under his Adminiſtration (which ſurely

ſhould have been ſpecified), the Inconveniencies, it is plain, affected the Maſter only, not the School; and an *additional Maſter*, or an *additional Salary* to thoſe in being, would have removed them all.——There were, at the Time of this Petition, Boarding Houſes *unoccupied*, tho' within the pretended Reach of Inſpection and Influence:—— There were ſome *diſcouraged*:—— So that the *Bounds* of Inſpection and Influence ſeem not to be the natural and neceſſary *Bounds* of the School.

It follows then,—— That it is *by reaſon* of the Conveniency of the Maſter that a SQUARE muſt be built. —— And this being ſettled, we are no longer to wonder, that, there being a Piece of Ground called *Deans-Yard*, and alſo certain other Pieces of Ground contiguous thereto, affording

ing a very convenient Situation for it,—*Both* ſhould be artfully repreſented as in a manner *waſte* alike.—Theſe are the Words of the Petition:

—"That the Piece of Ground "called *Deans-Yard*, together with "certain other Pieces of Ground "contiguous thereto, upon which "ſeveral *old* and *ruinous* Houſes "are *now ſtanding*."—

But *Deans-Yard* is far from being in that Condition; many thouſand Pounds having been laid out, within a few Years, in building *new*, and repairing and ornamenting *other* Houſes. —But if it were ſo,—The Owners of ruinous Houſes any-where have a Right, controulable only by Parliament, to conſult their *own Convenience*, as to the *Time* and *Manner* of repairing or rebuilding them.

An

An *Eſtate* may be capable of great Improvement, and the *Owner* not in a Capacity to derive the proper Advantage from it.—— But what is not in his Power To-day, may be ſo To-morrow : —— And there is no Authority, I apprehend, any-where lodged, except in the Legiſlature, to ouſte a Man of his Property againſt his Will, merely becauſe he does not make the moſt of it.

Now the *Petitioners* do not ſo much as hint, that they ever applied to the *Owners* of theſe Houſes, for their *Opinion* and *Concurrence* in this Proceeding ; much leſs in the Enterprize, and the Advantage expected from it (which ought at leaſt to have been at their Option).—But having premiſed, " That ſeveral of the ſaid Pieces of " Ground and Houſes are either in " Settlement, or the Property of In-

" fants,

" fants, and others, unable by Law " to contract for the Sale thereof;" (that is to ſay, as well ſecured as poſſible againſt Alienation) content themſelves with declaring their own *Willingneſs* to contract for them, and at once *pray* to be impowered accordingly.

A PRAYER of the moſt extraordinary Kind, that ever came before Parliament.——

Two Private Men——For Dr. MARKHAM, as Maſter of the School, is no more; and Mr. SALTER has not the leaſt Connection with or Relation to the School:——Two *private Men*——— for *private Purpoſes* (without ſo much as naming the *Public* in their Petition)—— apply to Parliament (like the SPANIARDS to the POPE) for a Title to *Lands* and *Poſſeſſions* they have

have taken a Fancy to, and for Power to over-rule whatever the right Owners could urge to the contrary.

The *Petition*, when received, could only be received on the Terms *contained* in the Petition; and it can be no Indecency to ſay, — That WESTMINSTER-SCHOOL can furniſh no Sanction to the Pretences of a Couple of *Projectors* (ſo we may preſume to call them), which would not ſtand the Teſt of WESTMINSTER-HALL.

However, received it was; and, according to Form, a *Bill* was prepared and preſented thereon; — In the *Preamble* of which, ſome *new* Conſiderations are added to thoſe contained in the Petition.

It is urged, for Example, " That " ſeveral Families, deſirous of taking " Houſes near the School for the Sake " of educating their Children there, " had not been able to find ſuch as " were proper for their Reception; " and the *building* ſuch proper Houſes " is again ſpecified as one of the " *Items*, which, it was apprehended, " would tend greatly to the good " *Regulation* and *Management* of the " Scholars of the ſaid School."

It is alſo urged, in a Clauſe relating to *Deans-Yard*, and the ſeveral Parcels of Land contiguous thereto, ----" That the ſaid Yard, &c. would " not only be a very *convenient* Situation for Boarding Houſes, *Families*, " &c.---which would form a LARGE " SQUARE *very near* the ſaid School; " but alſo, that the *Area* of the ſaid " Square would be a ſafe and com-

" modious Place for the ſaid Scholars
" to recreate and exerciſe themſelves
" in ; — and that if One or more
" Streets were to be opened at the
" *End*, or on the *Sides*, of the ſaid
" Square, it would [at once] be
" conducive to the Good of the
" School, by hindering *Deans-Yard*
" from being a Thoroughfare, as it
" is at preſent,— and to the Neigh-
" bourhood round about, by being
" a very *commodious* and *uſeful Com-*
" *munication* from one End of *Weſt-*
" *minſter* to another."

So that *Deans-Yard* (according to the Allegations offered to Parliament) was to be *removed*,---- and yet to *remain* ; ---- and the *Square* was to be kept *ſhut* for the Good of the Boys,---and *open* for the Good of the Neighbourhood.——

The

The Merit, however, of laying open the ſaid Square and Streets is further urged in the next Clauſe,—— where the *Joint Adventurers* declare themſelves *willing* to make the neceſſary Purchaſes, and *able* ſo to do, as having already *raiſed* a Sum of Money for that Purpoſe; and in the firſt enacting Clauſe they are expreſly impowered —— "to lay open "the ſaid Square, by building Streets "or Avenues on the Sides of it."

The *Propriety*, before contended for, of obtaining the previous Conſent of the Owners of the Premiſes, is moreover implied, if not acknowleged, in the Clauſe which ſpecifies, ----"That the Dean and Chapter of "*Weſtminſter* were *willing* and *con-* "*ſenting* to have ſuch intended Square "carried into Execution."—— And this ſpecific Acknowlegement in their

Favour renders the Caſe of others, not ſo conſidered, the more notoriouſly grievous.—For a Right to the Poſſeſſion and Diſpoſition of Ten Shillings, is as much a Right, as a Right to the Poſſeſſion and Diſpoſition of Ten thouſand Pounds;—and in the Eye of the Law is to be conſidered accordingly:—— And yet it was the Deſire of the Petitioners, that as much Care might be taken, that the ſaid Dean and Chapter, and the Biſhop of *London*, ſhall not be *forced* to do what they have not a mind to do, as to *force* all others to comply with the *Will* of the Petitioners, in any Shape a *pliant Jury* * may think proper to award.—— But even the *Dean and Chapter*, tho' VISITORS of

* A recent Inſtance of undue Influence and *Partiality* will be ſhewn in the Second Part of this *Review*;—an Attempt being made to diſpoſſeſs a Gentleman of his Eſtate for leſs than a Third Part of its real Value.

the

the ſaid School, and original Proprietors of an Eſtate in the Premiſes, amounting in Value to ſeveral thouſand Pounds a Year, were not made acquainted with the Intention of the GENTLEMEN PROJECTORS, till their Petition had been referred to a Committee! —— And tho' in the Bill it was thus affirmed, That they were *willing* and *conſenting*, &c. —— it is certain, there is no ſuch MINUTE in the Chapter-Books; without which, no ſuch *Affirmation* could be *properly* authorized or relied on. —— So that, whether we trace the Proceedings of the Petitioners *upwards* or *downwards*, we find them alike obnoxious on the Head of PRESUMPTION or DISINGENUITY.

And, laſtly, —— It is affirmed —— "The ſaid Square, and ſupplemental "Streets, would not only be very "uſeful towards the good Govern-

"ment

" ment of the ſaid School, but alſo
" an *Ornament* to the City of *Weſt-*
" *minſter*, and greatly advantageous
" to the PUBLIC in general."

Thus the Conſideration of the *Public*, which ſhould have been the *Baſe* of the whole Building, was made uſe of by the Petitioners as a *Buttreſs* only.

And as to the Manner, in which the Project was to be ſo very advantageous to the PUBLIC, it is no-where explained.—On the contrary, if, by the Help of the Petition, we ſhould find it to conſiſt in *opening* a better Communication between the ſeveral Parts of *Weſtminſter*, even that Advantage was in a manner explained away : --- For the *Dean and Chapter* have Powers to *ſhut* or *open Deans-Yard*, the *New Square*, or any of the

the intended *Avenues* thereto:——So that every *public* Uſe is, by theſe Projectors, ſubjected to the Power of *private* Impoſition; and the *Community* is treated with as little Ceremony in this Point, as *Individuals* in all the reſt.

To a *gaudy*, *gaping*, *ſtaring*, *thoughtleſs* Nation (as this is moſt unfortunately become)—the Promiſe of a NEW SIGHT is always flattering, always bewitching; and, for the ſake of what is called a *New Ornament* added to the City of *Weſtminſter*,—the Gentlemen Petitioners flattered themſelves, let who would ſuffer, or who would complain, they ſhould have a Majority of the Town on their Side.

But even the Point of *Ornament* is a Point of the utmoſt Uncertainty.

---For

—For the ſame Complaiſance to the Dean and Chapter of *Weſtminſter*, which induced them to ſollicit the Good-will of that Reverend Body, and to ſpecify their having obtained it, (whether they had regularly and effectually obtained it, or not) induced them alſo to ſubject the PLAN to their Conſideration, though by the firſt enacting Clauſe the Petitioners are authorized, "at their own proper Coſt and Charges, to deſign, aſſign, lay open, make, and build a new Square of Four hundred by Five hundred Feet, *&c.*"—But unhappily for them, and for the ornamental Improvements they propoſe, the Proviſo, which follows the ſaid enacting Clauſe, leaves it doubtful, whether the *Square* propoſed is to be built, or not.—And it is alſo moſt certain, that to this Hour the Dean and Chapter have not agreed to

to a PLAN for the ſaid Square, *&c.* many Things of the higheſt Conſequence to them, as a Body, being firſt to be ſettled and agreed to by the Gentlemen Projectors, and which they have not as yet complied with, tho' promiſed, by their Agents, many Months ago.

An Oppoſition was made to the Bill, by the Veſtries of the Pariſhes of *St. Margaret* and *St. John*, and great Numbers of other Perſons, who were *mediately* or *immediately* in Danger of being Sufferers; and the following REASONS were urged by them againſt it:

That in Caſe the ſaid Bill ſhould become a Law, near Three hundred Houſes would be pulled down, and the Inhabitants of them diſperſed, to ſeek their Bread elſewhere:

That the Inconveniencies reſulting to the ſaid Inhabitants, from the *Difficulties* and *Diſtreſſes* thus brought upon them, could not poſſibly come under the Cognizance of a *Jury*, conſequently could not be in any Shape recompenſed:

That, according to what happened in the Caſe of *Weſtminſter-Bridge*, the bare Apprehenſion of being turned out at a ſhort Warning, would drive away the preſent *Occupiers* of the Ground in queſtion, and leave their *Houſes* in the Hands of the *Owners*:

That the Allegation contained in the Bill —— "That the greateſt Part "of the Houſes IN and about *Deans-*"*Yard* were *old*, *ruinous*, and *un-*"*tenantable*, was not true," —— there being but One Houſe in *Deans-Yard*,

at

at that Time, untenanted; few, if any, out of repair; ſeveral new ones lately built; and others within a few Years fitted up, at a great Expence:

That the Suggeſtion, of Want of proper Houſes for Boarding, was without the leaſt Foundation; there being no leſs than Six in *Great* and *Little Deans-Yard* capable of containing many more Boarders than they had, and of being eaſily enlarged.— Six additional large Houſes might have been built in *Little Deans-Yard*, cloſe to the School, and under the immediate Eye of both the Maſters, more than equal to the preſent Number of Scholars, if the real Good of the School had been the ſole Intent of the Petitioners.—This would have anſwered every *ſalutary* Purpoſe without the leaſt *Clamour*, or INJURY offered to private Property.

— *Smith-ſtreet* and *College-ſtreet* affording many more good Houſes for Perſons who are deſirous to be near the School, to inſpect the Behaviour of their Children; and no Complaint having ever been made of any Want of that kind, when the School was in its moſt flouriſhing State.

That as to the Pretence of Gentlemen's being deſirous to ſettle near the School, for the Sake of educating their Sons; it was ſcarce to be conceived — they would expoſe themſelves to the *Noiſe*, *Irregularities*, &c. to be expected in a SQUARE *deſtined* to ſuch Purpoſes; more eſpecially as many convenient Houſes, in good Streets, *very near* the School, were to be had already:

That if the Petitioners for the Bill intended to reduce all their Pupils to the

the Neceſſity of boarding in their own SQUARE,— the *Trade* of Boarding Houſes would become a MONOPOLY, and the Price of Education, (already too great) would be enhanced accordingly ;——And that, if they had no ſuch Intention, all the Pretences urged in Support of the Undertaking fell to the Ground :

That thoſe, who encouraged the Bill, on a Suppoſition that the Scope and Drift of it was for the *ſole* Benefit of WESTMINSTER-SCHOOL, might be convinced the *Petitioners* were actuated by lucrative Motives only ;— ſeeing that the vaſt Extent of Ground and Houſes taken in (near a Mile in Circumference), was infinitely more than could poſſibly be wanted to anſwer any of the declared Ends of the Petition :

That

That how reaſonable ſoever it might be, and had been thought, to compel Perſons to part with, or ſuffer Inconveniencies in, their Property, for ſuch *National* Purpoſes—as OPENING ROADS, BUILDING BRIDGES, MAKING RIVERS NAVIGABLE, *&c.* —— That no Inſtance could be ſhewn—where the Legiſlature had granted ſuch a Latitude of Power to any *Set* of Perſons whatſoever, in Favour of Purpoſes ſo little ſignificant, as thoſe ſet forth in the Bill appeared, even in the moſt advantageous Light they could be placed in;——No ſufficient Reaſon could be offered, nor ever can be, to juſtify the Reſtraints laid on ſo many hundred Families to quit their *Houſes* and their *Bread*, merely that a few Gentlemen might get better Intereſt for their Money *; and

That,

* It cannot be ſuppoſed, that it was the Intention of the Legiſlature to diſpoſſeſs *Individuals* of

That, as the *Inducements* offered by the Bill were *inſufficient*, ſo the very *Ends* propoſed were *unattainable*:

That the undertaking to regulate Boarders by *ſuch* a Confinement, would *diſguſt* more of them than it would *reſtrain*: —— That as *Extremities* are apt to produce *Extremities*, believing themſelves *injured* by this *Hardſhip* on the one hand, they would think only of making themſelves amends by *Licentiouſneſs* on the other: —— That being thus collected, they would find it eaſier to *combine*: —— That being once *combined*, no *Porters* or *Gate-keepers* would dare to withſtand them; and, when they ſallied out, they would

of their Properties, contrary to their Conſent, in order that the *Petitioners*, or their *Aſſigns*, might repair ſome of thoſe very Houſes, and lett them afterwards at *advanced* Rents.—Some People would call this a *Jobb*.——

ſtrike

ſtrike Terror thro' the whole Neighbourhood:——That if (in Conformity to the *Declenſion* of the Times) their Spirits ſhould not riſe high enough for any ſuch Attempts as theſe, they might deſcend to *plot*, *bribe*, and *corrupt*; and the Integrity of *Porters* was no more to be relied on, than that of other People:

That Experience had ſhewn, and continued to ſhew in the preſent Caſe of W————--R and ETON Schools, (*One*, under the Conduct of wiſe and excellent Maſters, flouriſhing becauſe unincloſed, and therefore beſt ſuited to the *Free Spirits* of a FREEBORN PEOPLE; — The *Other*, ſurrounded with *Walls*, *Gates*, &c. in the ſame manner as this of WESTMINSTER was now propoſed to be, and for that ſame Reaſon, as well as the increaſed Expence of Boarding, *diſeſteemed*, and in a manner *deſerted*):

That

That the Succeſs of the Project would be juſt the contrary to what was delivered concerning it:

And, Laſtly,—That the ROYAL and ILLUSTRIOUS FOUNDRESS providing and aſſigning *the very Place* where the Youths were to recreate themſelves out of School Hours, had ſhewn herſelf as careful of their HEALTH and LIBERTY, as of their STUDIES or their MORALS.

Theſe, tho' in Form ſomewhat different, were the Reaſons againſt the Bill diſtributed to the Members of both Houſes.

And it is not yet too late to add, —That tho' all the Powers, which can give the *Maſter* of ſuch a School a due Degree of Influence over his Pupils, ought to be put into his

Hands; — it is nevertheleſs true,— That his principal Efforts ſhould be made by the Force of *Reaſon*.—The *Lure* of Perſuaſion, and the Authority of his own *Deportment* and *Example*.

It is a known *Nurſery-Fact*, — That Children properly ſubdued by an *equal* Mixture of *Awe* and *Love*, to the *Will* and *Pleaſure* of the *Mother*, have been held as faſt by a *Thread* as a *Chain*: And the Inference goes on thro' every Stage of Life.

But to proceed:

While the Bill was before the Lords,--- a very large Body of the Inhabitants of the Pariſhes of *St. Margaret* and *St. John* petitioned againſt it in the following Words:

"*To*

" *To the Right Honourable the Lords*
" *Spiritual and Temporal in Par-*
" *liament aſſembled.*

" *The humble Petition of ſeveral of the*
" *Inhabitants of the United Pariſhes*
" *of* St. Margaret *and* St. John the
" Evangeliſt, *in the City of* Weſt-
" minſter, *whoſe Houſes are liable*
" *to be pulled down by virtue of*
" *an Act, intituled,* An Act to
" enable the Reverend *William*
" *Markham,* Doctor of Laws, *Tho-*
" *mas Salter,* Eſquire, and others,
" to build Houſes, and open a
" Square, in and upon a certain
" Piece of Ground called *Deans-*
" *Yard, Weſtminſter,* and ſeveral
" Pieces of Ground contiguous
" thereto;

" *Humbly ſheweth,*

" THAT in caſe the ſaid Bill
" ſhould paſs into a Law, it

 " will

" will greatly injure your Petitioners
" in their Properties, and will be the
" abſolute Ruin of ſeveral Hundreds
" of Tradeſmen and Artificers, who
" muſt be driven from their reſpec-
" tive Dwellings, to ſeek their Bread
" in Places, where they are un-
" known.

" And your Petitioners humbly
" ſubmit to the Conſideration of
" your Lordſhips, whether ſuch
" Powers, as are contained in this
" Bill, have in any Inſtance been
" granted by the Legiſlature, when
" the Object propoſed has not been
" ſome great and public Advan-
" tage.

" That your Petitioners apprehend,
" that the Inconveniencies propoſed
" to be remedied by this Bill are only
" imaginary; that the Evils, which
" it

" it would bring upon your Peti-
" tioners, are real and ſubſtantial;
" and the Advantages to ariſe from
" it would be confined ſolely to the
" Projectors and Proprietors of the
" Houſes to be erected in purſuance
" thereof.

" Your Petitioners therefore hum-
" bly pray your Lordſhips, that they
" may be heard, by their Counſel,
" againſt the ſaid Bill; and that it
" may not paſs into a Law."

On the Side of the *Petitioners* appeared Mr. PRATT—A Name, that carries *Eſteem*, *Reſpect*, and *Authority* along with it ———

On the Side of the *Projectors*, one Mr. *c*—*x*. ———

Both were heard——The FORMER with that Applauſe and Admiration, which

which will ever attend Genius: A Genius like that of Mr. PRATT's, which ſuffers not the Character of the ORATOR to be ſeparated from that of the GENTLEMAN —— The *Latter* with Patience and Pardon;—which was ſo much the more wonderful, as this *learned Advocate* departed from the Cauſe of his Clients, to give a Scope to a peculiar Talent for Invective *, *unreſtrained* by Conſiderations of *Decency* and *Truth*. ——

Upon the Iſſue —— the Houſe divided; and, by a Majority of FIVE, the *Bill* became a LAW.

But as the *Laws* of *Britain* are not, like thoſe of the MEDES and PER-

* A Gentleman was treated by him, at this higheſt *Bar* of the Nation, more like a *Criminal*, than as a Petitioner, *permitted* to apply for RELIEF, in Behalf of his own and the Properties and Welfare of Hundreds!!

SIANS,

SIANS, *unqueſtionable* and *irrepealable*, — it is humbly preſumed, — that, upon mature Deliberation, this Act will appear, in many Inſtances, more grievous than was at firſt apprehended; and not likely to anſwer the End propoſed, which was the Good of *Weſtminſter-School*.

According to the beſt Enquiries that could be made, above FOUR HUNDRED Houſes, inſtead of *Three Hundred* (as before alledged), were to be pulled down, and above a THOUSAND Inhabitants turned looſe, to look for their Bread and Settlements *elſewhere*. —— Such was the Uſe intended to be made by the Powers beſtowed and conveyed.

I hope it may humbly be affirmed, —(without violating the great Reſpect due to Parliament) that there were

were in this Act ſome OMISSIONS, and ſome AMBIGUITIES.——

A Specimen of its AMBIGUITIES has already been given, in the Caſe of DEANS-YARD and the NEW SQUARE.

And under the Head of OMISSIONS — it is impoſſible to forget, that this Act is thought to have been founded, in ſome degree, upon the bare Aſſertion of the TWO PETITIONERS, —*viz.* That they had raiſed a Sum for the Purpoſes ſpecified in the Bill *. —No *Eſtimate* was either *offered*, or *called for*; — nobody aſked, *what* the Sum was they had raiſed, or in *what* Hands it was depoſited; ----- much leſs did they produce VOUCHERS, and give the neceſſary SECU-

* The Projectors would have found it very difficult to have ſhewn that ſuch a Sum was raiſed: Perhaps it is not raiſed to this Hour.

RITY

RITY for *performing* what they undertook, or for *indemnifying* thoſe they injured :——

Which was the more extraordinary,—Becauſe the Space of Ground included in the Bill was not laid out with the *Preciſion* neceſſary for avoiding *Doubts*, *Difficulties*, and *Inconveniencies* ; ——

Becauſe the *Purchaſes*, *Conſiderations*, *Loſs of Ground*, *New Buildings*, *&c.* as far as the Premiſes could be computed, required little leſs, to complete their Deſign, than *Three hundred and Fifty*, or perhaps *Four hundred thouſand Pounds* :——

Becauſe the *Two Petitioners* had no viſible Means to levy ſuch a Sum ; — Becauſe their *Aſſociates*, if they had any, could not be legally produced ; — Becauſe no Time was aſcertained for making the Purchaſes ;

— and, conſequently, many of thoſe Buildings which were *Houſes*, when forſaken by the Tenants, would be found (as the Projectors perhaps wiſhed them) *Ruins*, when a JURY came to ſit upon them: In which Caſe the ſeveral LANDLORDS, who, during the Interval, had been deprived of the Benefit of their Eſtates (as being equally diſabled from *letting*, *ſelling*, or *mortgaging* them), would find it as hard to fix the *Damage* they had ſuſtained, as to obtain a *Recompence* for it.

So that even the boaſted *Proviſion* to ſecure the Subject from Damage, by the Interpoſition of a *Jury*, rather ſerves to make a *ſpecious Figure* in the Caſe, than to afford the *Subject* any ſolid Hope of *Protection* from it.

Beſides,

Beſides, what Amends can be made to any Gentleman, who has laid out his Money on a favourite Spot of Ground;—who has been at a great additional Expence in removing every Incumbrance about it; and who has fitted up every Part of his Habitation to his own peculiar Taſte?

But this may be called a *private* Conſideration. Let us ſee how theſe Gentlemen Projectors have treated *Public* Bodies.——

They preſented their Petition to the Houſe of Commons without previouſly conſulting with, much leſs having the Approbation of, the Dean and Chapter;—the firſt Inſtance of ſuch a Step taken by a Maſter of the School ſince its Foundation.— After ſuch an Attempt, it was not to be wondered, that the Legiſlature thought

proper to give ſo many *reſtraining* Clauſes in their Favour, as *Governors* and *Viſitors of the School*, and conſequently the beſt Judges of every thing that would conduce to its real Honour and Welfare.——

If a WORK-HOUSE (one of the beſt in *London* or *Weſtminſter*) ſtands in theſe Gentlemen's Way, they have Power to remove it, *when*, *where*, and *how* they pleaſe.—If the *New Work-houſe* ſhall coſt more than the Pariſhes of *St. Margaret* and *St. John* are allowed for the *Old One*,—the *Pariſhes* are to pay the Difference.—— And if any *Pariſh* or *Pariſhes* ſhould become Sufferers in their *Poor Rates*, by ſuch a Variety of *Mutations* and *Depredations*,—the Two Petitioners, their Repreſentatives and Aſſigns, are only anſwerable for the Deficiency till they have Houſes and Tenants enough to do

do it for them, after which the Load is to fall upon them.

It has been already ſaid, That AS THE TREE IS, SO WILL BE THE FRUITS: —— And it would not be impertinent, in this Place, to recite the ſame Saying again.

The extraordinary *Powers* of this Act of Parliament have hitherto been as extraordinarily adminiſtred.

Above a Year and a Half ago, the Perſons, in whoſe Favour it paſſed, gave Notice, that they would *treat* with, and actually *pay*, the Proprietors of all the Ground and Houſes in queſtion: —— And as many of the Tenants immediately thereupon took Wing, and abandoned their Dwellings, it was expected and believed, that theſe *Treaties* would be in gene-

ral

ral perfected, and that the Conſideration-Money would be immediately paid.——

Inſtead of which, the ſaid abandoned Dwellings remain in the ſame abandoned State; if that can be called the ſame, which is every Day becoming worſe and worſe. —— The Complaints of many of the Owners met with little or no Regard:—Appointments ſeem to have been made only to be broken: —— And many of the Perſons, in ſo compendious a Manner diſpoſſeſſed of a *certain Property*, are now expoſed to the expenſive Iſſue of an Appeal to the High Court of Chancery, for the *Indemnifications* they have little or no Proſpect of recovering any other Way.

If the Sum ſaid to be raiſed by the *Two Projectors*, for the Purpoſes of

of the Act, was *actually* raiſed, — why is it not applied accordingly? —And if no ſuch Sum was raiſed, (which is now more than probable) have not the ſaid *Projectors* offered as great an Inſult to the HONOUR and WISDOM of PARLIAMENT on *one* hand, as to the *Property* of the *Subject* on the *other?*

Whether it was or was not raiſed, — the Hardſhips obtruded on ſuch Numbers of innocent People are equally grievous. — And that no kind of Aggravation might be wanting, it is now aſſerted, and believed, —that the firſt Set of Adventurers have made over all their Powers to another: — But whether in conſequence of having been bubbled themſelves, by thoſe they relied on for the Means of carrying it into Execution; —or to avoid impending Litigations;

—or

— or for the Sake of any *poſitive* Advantage; can be aſcertained only by ſuch an *Enquiry*, as it is plain, from this REVIEW, the whole Tranſaction deſerves.

And if it ſhould come out to be an inconteſtible Truth, that the Petitioners have actually diſpoſed of, and conveyed away, the Powers given them by the Legiſlature, to a Perſon no-ways connected with WESTMINSTER-SCHOOL; — it may be preſumed, that it will no longer be eſteemed a MEASURE worthy the future Zeal and Attention of the *Great*, and reſpectable Perſons, who, for that Reaſon, at firſt ſo warmly eſpouſed it.

There is a PLACE, where, for a thouſand obvious Conſiderations, ſuch an ENQUIRY ought to be made; — where

where no Sanction will be given to any unfair Practice of any kind whatſoever ;—and where PROBITY and WISDOM have not, for many Years paſt, had ſo fair a Chance for prevailing, as at preſent.

There is no need to recapitulate, in this Place, the PROPOSITIONS we ſet out with : — Whatever they are worth in *Uſe* and *Application*, the intelligent Reader will find out for himſelf.

It is apparent — The Benefit of WESTMINSTER-SCHOOL, was only the LABEL to the Project ; — and that *Individuals*, under ſpecious Colours and Pretences, have been aggrieved for the Sake of *Individuals*.

The *Former* have certainly a Right to *Redreſs* ; and the *Latter* certainly

cannot pretend to *Indemnity* againſt juſt Complaints: —— And if they ſhould attempt it, it is not to be imagined, but that they would draw down Condemnation on themſelves.

To ſum up all:

When we affect a Concern for the Education of our Youth, we ought not to diſgrace the *End* by the *Means*.

If a Spirit of *Rapine*, *Fraud*, and *Oppreſſion*, is to be traced in all *we do*, no regard will be ſhewn to *what we ſay*.

On the contrary, the more *Merit* we pretend to, — the more *Cenſure* we are liable to; and nothing can ſcreen us from it but *univerſal Profligacy*.

Unhappily

Unhappily for Mankind, there is more *Contagion* in *Vice*, than *Influence* in *Virtue*.

If we do our beſt to authorize *Immorality* and *Injuſtice*, and, by the Dint of Practice, *inoculate* Corruption, and a Love of DESPOTISM, into our very Boys at School,—they will learn *there*, whilſt they read the MAXIMS and MANNERS of Antiquity, to deſpiſe HEROES and PHILOSOPHERS as ſo many MADMEN.

FINIS.